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LATVIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES
INTERNAL SECURITY - R

On November 22, 1963, Reverend Adolfs Klaupiks, Relief Director, Baptist World Alliance, 1628 16th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., was interviewed.

Background

Reverend Klaupiks advised that he resides at the World Alliance headquarters while in Washington, D. C., but has his permanent address at Baptist Parish of Latvians in Bucks County, Rural Free Delivery 3, Quakertown, Pennsylvania. Klaupiks stated that his father was Janis Klaupiks, who is deceased. Reverend Klaupiks stated he is acquainted with many of the Latvian emigres in the United States, many of whom he sees during his frequent lecture tours throughout the United States. Klaupiks stated that he also shows various films which he has prepared commemorating various famous Latvian personages and holidays, and he travels to various cities narrating these films. During the course of these trips he is able to re-establish old relationships with his many Latvian acquaintances.

Trip to Soviet Latvia

Klaupiks discussed his recent trip to Soviet Latvia as a member of a cultural exchange group sponsored by the United States Department of State (USDS). He said that he was able to see many of his old friends and again observe the changes taking place in Latvia. During the course of his stay he had received a number of documents from a woman of many years acquaintance, whom in fact he had married long ago in his church in Latvia. She asked that the documents be taken and published in the United States. He said that he was hesitant about taking these documents

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which consisted essentially of hand-written poems and notes regarding the conditions in Latvia. Klaupiks stated he made the mistake of taking these documents to his room whereupon he was visited by the KGB (Committee of State Security) and charged with receiving from a Soviet citizen, material detrimental to the Soviet Union. He stated that over the next three days he was interrogated by the KGB and accused of being a provocator, a spy and a person who was looking for a way to embarrass the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Klaupiks denied all of the accusations, and all of the materials he had received from different persons was removed by the KGB. Klaupiks explained that appearing in Latvia as a native Latvian, but now an American, is unbelievable in its effect upon the average Latvian. Everywhere he went Klaupiks stated that people pressed upon him persons, notes and messages of all kinds, asking that conditions within the country be made known to outsiders. He said many of these messages he refused to take; however, many were stuffed into his pockets.

While in his hotel room which was being searched, Klaupiks asked for a doctor since he had a very bad cold. A young woman doctor appeared and was quite open in her conversation with Klaupiks, much to his surprise. She told him about her job, her pay was 72 rubles per month, and the fact that she would receive a raise in a few years. She talked about her family and indicated both she and her husband worked to make ends meet.

After some days of interrogation the Soviets released Klaupiks with his assurance that he would not make an official complaint about this. Klaupiks said that he was treated well and at no time did any of the Soviets touch him physically.

Latvian Emigre Groups in the United States

With regard to the Latvian emigre groups in this country he said that they were essentially made up of various social and fraternal groups which are represented in the American Latvian Association (ALA). This is a National Organization with offices in Room 206-7 Edmonds Building, 917 15th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. The Chairman of this group is Professor Peter Lejins of the University of Maryland, a leading sociologist and well thought of man in the Latvian community. Lejins is married to an American woman thought to be of German extraction. Klaupiks named the officers of the ALA as follows:

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Secretary General	Bruno Zilbats
Information Officer	Curtis Melcovics
Treasurer	Arydis Zageris, also known as Arvid Zegars
Cultural Section	(First Name Valkne)
	Norvilkis, who is in New York

With the exception of Norvilkis, all officers are in Washington, D. C.

Reverend Klaupiks stated the membership is composed of persons who are interested in Latvian affairs, the restoration of a Free Latvia, and is a cohesive force among the emigres.

There are a number of Latvian fraternities, the members of which attended the University of Latvia or the University of Riga. He said that these groups hold their fraternity meetings, usually no women allowed, and talk over old times and engage in a social evening. Members of these fraternities are usually also members of the A.L.S. Although he was not acquainted with the names of all fraternity members of the various groups, Klaupiks was familiar with the last last Ivars Berzins, who was formerly employed by the Bureau of Public Roads and who resided at 1567 Colonial Terrace, Arlington, Virginia, would soon leave his employment here and move to New York. Berzins will be going to work for a wealthy Latvian builder, Jānis Pīlāns in the building business. Klaupiks did not know the exact date of departure. Berzins is the chairman of the Latvian Youth Association. Klaupiks stated that in this connection all of the Latvian student groups met in Boston, Massachusetts, November 8, 9, and 10, 1953, to celebrate Latvian holidays.

Klaupiks stated that he is acquainted with Heinrich Bagaltsis who resided in New York, only by virtue of his association with the organization, Drugava; Vanagi, a veterans organization of former members of the Latvian Legion who fought against the Russians during World War II. Klaupiks stated that this organization has been under attack by the Soviets for many years, the accusations being that the organization permits war criminals into its membership. In connection with this organization the Soviets are now circulating a film in this country called "Vilnači". This film, which Klaupiks was invited to see in Latvia during his last visit, is a propaganda type picture which purports to show the traitorous parts played in the history of Latvia by various members of Drugava; Vanagi, who are mentioned in the picture by name, and who are now in the United States.

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Some five to six years ago the Daugavas Vanagi came under attack by various members of the Latvian community as the result of the dissatisfaction of some with the way various monies of the organization were expended. Various Latvian War invalids alleged that although Daugavas Vanagi purported to help disabled veterans, no monies were actually so expended. A new group which calls themselves the Latvian War Invalid Association was formed. This group collects monies from their members and other contributors and uses it to help invalids. In this connection Klaupiks stated that a camp for invalids is maintained in the Pocono Mountains. The chairman of this association is Robert Antaus, a former officer in the Latvian Legion. Klaupiks stated that it is his understanding that this is a legitimate organization although he has not been intimately connected with it. He said that some people suspect this new group because the Soviets have apparently close ties to attack it or its members. Klaupiks states that he does not feel the Soviets have much alternative at this time inasmuch as they have attacked Daugavas' Vanagi so continuously that any group which broke away could not be criticized with any consistency.

Shipments to Latvia

Klaupiks stated that on many occasions members of the Latvian community will enlist his aid in sending packages or money to relatives in Latvia, USSR. He stated that from past experience, and from the people themselves in Latvia with whom he has spoken, this business of sending packages is sometimes in the hands of unscrupulous persons. He stated that he has a list in his office of travel agencies who are approved by Intourist, Official Soviet Travel Agency, to send packages to the USSR. He said that he makes an effort to try as many different agencies as possible to find those most reliable. He said that recently he sent a package through the Circle Travel Agency in Philadelphia simply to determine the reliability of this agency. He said that he knows no one there but he had some business with them previously. Klaupiks added that there is no significance to his use of this agency or any other travel agency in the United States. In fact, according to Klaupiks many of the emigres are getting away from sending parcels to their respective countries because of the unreliability of the people involved and also because of the cost. Many of them are now sending the men by directly to Scandinavian countries along with a list of items to be purchased. These are then sent directly to the country involved. Klaupiks has heard from the recipients that this system has been working most satisfactorily and in the future most of this business will be done in this manner.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Klaupiks stated that George Lepkiski taught and taught

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Zietins, both of Washington, D. C., were members of the "Fraternitas Cursica".

Klaupiks identified Peter Krum as one Peteris Kruvins. Source said that he met this man one time in New York about nine months ago when he had gone there to show and narrate a film about Latvia which he has prepared. Klaupiks stated that after the showing of the film there followed the usual social hour, at which time a man answering the description of Peter Krum, approached and introduced himself by his Latvian name of Peteris Kruvins. He congratulated Klaupiks on his narration of the film and said that he was a merchant seaman. He went on to state that as a seaman he made frequent trips to Europe and has gone into Latvia a number of times as a tourist. Kruvins extolled the progress being made in Latvia and said that while in the country he stayed with his relatives and when he decided to stay longer, simply had his visa extended. Kruvins told Klaupiks that he had plans to lead a tourist group on a tour of Latvia this past summer; however, Klaupiks does not know if this trip actually took place. Klaupiks said that there was a group of Latvians who visited Latvia this year from New York, however, he does not know if this group was under the direction of Kruvins.

Klaupiks said he was surprised to hear of all of this activity in and about Latvia from Kruvins. Klaupiks stated he has visited Latvia a number of times since World War II, both as a member of the Baptist World Alliance and also as a member of official United States cultural delegations. He has had considerable experience with the Soviets as regards the obtaining and extension of visas and also the obtaining of permission to stay with relatives while visiting the USSR. He said he was amazed with the apparent ease with which Kruvins arranged matters during his trip, if in fact, he actually did these things. If true, Klaupiks stated Kruvins has "interesting connections".

Inquiry was made as to whether Klaupiks ever knew that Peter Krum owned a tavern in Brooklyn, New York. He said he did not but related the following "interesting" story:

He said that there now resides in Brooklyn, New York, one Elza Febranska, maiden name, who was formerly a singer operator in Latvia. He stated that in about 1933 or 1935, much to the surprise of the Latvian emigre community in the United States, Febranska went to Latvia to visit with her relatives. While in Latvia, she was featured on radio and television, over which engine she had political interviews extolling the progress being made in Latvia and the freedom existing there. She was interviewed by the press on a number of occasions and performances were in the more favorable vein to the regime. Upon her return to

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the United States, she was besieged by many in the Latvian community for some explanation as to her actions. Klaupiks said she has never uttered a word as to what she did in Latvia and has refused to discuss this with anyone.

In 1960, Zebrowska made another trip to Latvia and, in fact, had somehow arranged to give a concert in Riga, Latvia. This concert, according to Klaupiks, was poorly attended and received a poor press. After some time, Zebrowska again returned to this country and was again mute about her trip and has not, to the knowledge of Klaupiks, discussed the trip with anyone. Klaupiks stated that the whole purpose of his conveying this information is that Zebrowska is reportedly married to a man who owns a tavern in Brooklyn. Klaupiks stated that he does not know the name of this person, but it was interesting to him that Krumins also owned a tavern and had apparent once in arranging trips to Latvia as did Zebrowska.